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THE PLACE OF 4-H CLUB WORK IN RURAL LEADERSHIP

A radio talk by Hugo Graumann, Greer county, Oklahoma, delivered in the 4-H Club program, National Farm and Home Hour, Saturday, December 2, 1933, and broadcast by a network of 58 associate NBC stations.

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Good day, fellow club members, all over the United States. It is my privilege to talk to you today on 4-H leadership and the part such leadership plays in our communities. We all recognize the fact that, more than ever before, our rural communities need leaders who will cooperate in making our new day in agriculture a success.

These leaders, who must show us how to improve our methods of farming and our habits of living should possess business ability; a reputation for fairness; sound judgement; and integrity and vision.

This is the type of leader we are developing in the 4-H clubs of America. In 4-H work we are encouraging every phase of leadership. One club member may become a leader by developing a prize animal that leads other boys and girls to complete an equally successful project. Another may become a local leader of a farm and home community 4-H club that sets a fine example for an entire farming neighborhood.

I can, of course, describe to you best the 4-H work being carried on in Oklahoma where many members are becoming leaders by successfully completing 4-H projects. I personally started in club work with a poultry project and finally became a member of the National Champion poultry judging team. We Oklahoma boys and girls believe we know how to carry on a project successfully and how to advise others who strive for the same accomplishments.

Our 4-H club program develops leaders in three main ways: They are, by group organization, where a member presides at club meetings; by demonstrating the improved practical methods in every line of project activity; and, finally, in creative leisure time activities, such as leading group singing and playing and giving programs consisting of music and dramas.

All of these phases of leadership, I have kept in mind during my eight years of club work. My own experiences in club work taught my how to help others achieve. Because of this type of leadership, club work has survived in my county during the last two years when we had neither a county farm or home demonstration agent to help develop club activities.

The 4-H work not only encourages leadership in 4-H clubs but also in other phases of rural life such as the home, the church, and the school. As you know, 4-H club work and the home cannot be separated. The home really represents the fifth H of our national club emblem. The value of club work in my county in making boys and girls happy in their own homes where they work with their own farm and home projects cannot be over-estimated. I know of homes where 4-H club work has helped to do away with isolation and has

brought families into the community and into the spirit of working for the advancement of the whole agricultural program.

Breaking away from isolation that has been caused by the location of the farms, each one a considerable distance from the other, encourages 4-H members to seek a higher education. In their school work many of our club members become recognized leaders. For example, in my county, school teachers and superintendents have remarked that any undertaking requiring responsibility on the part of a student can be entrusted to a 4-H club member.

The 4-H boys and girls in my state demonstrate better practices and choose occupations in which they can make the best use of their training and experience. We have found that by developing our leadership qualities we develop both our communities and ourselves. Personal friendships are encouraged between parents, teachers, leaders, and neighbors. Our 4-H members are growing into men and women whose social positions are being improved by the 4-H experience of earlier years.

Although it meant a lot of hard work to carry on 4-H activities in my county in 1932, I believe that the experiences fellow club members and I secured while carrying the responsibility of club leaders will be very valuable to us for many years.

While social trends in our agricultural communities are rapidly changing we are learning to cooperate instead of compete, and club members in my state and county are developing into leaders who understand the steps we are taking in improving our farming and our farm life in accordance with present ideals of our new planned agriculture.